[English]

Denial of Visa by Pakistan to Indian Pilgrims

1115. SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of recent reports on Pakistan's refusal to grant visas to 400 Indian pilgrims to visit Katasraj in that country:

(b) if so, whether the Government have taken up the matter with Pakistan;

(c) if so, the details and outcome thereof;

(d) whether any memorandum of understanding was signed with Pakistan to allow such visits to various places in both the countries; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI EDURDO FALEIRO): (a) to (e). The Protocol on visits to Religious Shrines, signed between India and Pakistan in September, 1974, provides for pilgrims from either country to visit specified shrines in the other country. At the meeting of the India-Pakistan Joint Commission in July 1989, it was further agreed that there would be two visits to Katasraj every year, with each visiting group comprising 200 pilgrims. One such visit was scheduled for 20-25 October, 1991. On October 15, 1991, Government of Pakistan informed us that the proposed dates for the visit to Katasraj were coinciding with those proposed for another visit by Indian pilgrims to Hayat Pitafi, and that it was difficult to organise two visits at the same time. Since the late cancellation would have caused inconvenience to the intending pilgrims, at Government's request the Government of Pakistan subsequently agreed to the visit. Due to the short time available, however, only 52 pilgrims could undertake the journey.

Utilisation of Irrigation Potential

116. SHRI K.V. THANGKABALU: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a gap between the creation and utilisation of irrigation potential in the country under major, medium and minor irrigation projects; and

(b) if so, the break-up thereof during the last three years. year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The cumulative gap in utilisation of irrigation potential at the end of the last three years was an under:-

(*in million ha.*)

	1988-89	*1989-90*	*1990-91*
Major & Irrigation	4.75	4.10	4.09
Minor Irrigation	3.06	3.18	3.48

Acquisition of Land by Public Sector Steel Plants

1117. SHRI SYED SHAHABUDDIN: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the area of land acquired for public sector steel plants, plant-wise;

(b) the area of land actually being utilized at present and the area unutilized in each plant;

(c) the ultimate purpose for which the plant concerned proposes to make use of the unutilised land; and

(d) whether the plants propose to utilise these lands for any other productive purpose, directly or indirectly, during the interim period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b). The details are as given below: